

American Embassy Baku

Guide for American Citizens

The American Embassy in Baku provides a wide range of services to American citizens in Azerbaijan. The Consular Section is staffed by American Foreign Service Officers and a staff of both Azerbaijani and American citizens who can help you with a variety of problems that may confront citizens abroad. This pamphlet is designed to help Americans understand the services we can offer and to provide useful information for your stay in Azerbaijan. This pamphlet is not all-inclusive. If you have a problem or question not addressed here, please call us at the numbers listed or stop by during our public hours. ***We are here to help you!***

Important Contact Information for American Citizens

American Embassy Baku

83 Azadlig Prospekt
Baku 370007
Tel: (994-12) 98-03-35/36

Fax: (994-12) 90-66-71
Consular Fax: (994-12) 98-37-55

<http://www.usembassybaku.org>
<http://www.travel.state.gov>

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U.S. Visas for Azerbaijanis

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Public Hours at the Consular Section of the American Embassy, Baku

American Citizens Services:

Mon, Wed, Fri 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. or by appointment
Except for American and Azerbaijani holidays.

Non-Immigrant Visas:

Tuesday 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
(Visas generally are distributed Wednesday at 5 p.m.)
Thursday 2:00pm-4:00 pm
(Visas generally are distributed Friday at 5pm)

Please see our website for more information:

<http://www.usembassybaku.org/consul/consmain.html>

Registration with the Embassy

All U.S. citizens residing in Azerbaijan for more than a few days are encouraged to register with the Embassy. Registration allows us to:

- help you more quickly if your passport is lost
- contact you in case of an emergency
- provide information about your whereabouts to family and friends (if you sign a Privacy Act Waiver)
- include you in our warden system, which we use to keep Americans advised of what to do in case of an emergency (you will be included only if you give your permission)

To register, you will simply need to present your U.S. passport at the Consular Section during American Citizens Services' public hours and complete a simple form. A sample form is attached to this pamphlet. There is no charge for this service.

Warden System

Any American citizen who registers becomes part of our warden system. Your name will be given to a volunteer American-citizen "warden" in your area. Your warden would contact you in the event of an emergency to pass on to you information from the Embassy. Your warden may also be able to serve as a point of contact for other useful information from the Embassy.

U. S. Taxes

U.S. citizens and resident aliens generally must file income tax returns, whether they live in the U.S. or abroad. We have federal IRS forms and instruction booklets. Drop by the Consular Section during public hours for forms. There is no fee. Unfortunately, we cannot offer any tax advice. The nearest IRS office, and the one with jurisdiction over Azerbaijan, is in Berlin.

U.S. Embassy Berlin
Clay Allee 170
14195, Berlin, Germany

Tel: 49-30-8305-1140
Fax: 49-30-8305-1145

In addition to contacting Customer Assistance employees in Berlin, taxpayers can call the Philadelphia Service Center for both technical and account assistance. The number is not toll free. The phone lines are available from 6am to 2am (EST) Monday through Friday except American Holidays.

The number is 215 516-2000

IRS forms are also available on the internet through www.irs.gov.

Passport Services



Americans should safeguard passports as they would any other valuable. If your passport is lost or stolen in Azerbaijan, come to the Consular Section during business hours to apply for a replacement. If you need to renew your passport, you may also come to the Consular Section between 2:00 – 5:00 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, or Friday to apply for a new passport. In order to issue an American passport, we must have proof of identity and citizenship. If you are renewing a valid or recently expired passport, your passport will serve as proof of both identity and citizenship. Otherwise to prove your identity, you need to provide two forms of photo ID, such as a driver's license. To prove citizenship, you need to provide a certified copy of your birth certificate, certificate of naturalization or other similar documents. All passport applicants must provide two identical 2" x 2" photos in either color or black and white. Due to new security measures, all passports are now issued in the United States and sent to Embassies. This process takes about two weeks from the day of application. Please plan accordingly. The fee for an adult renewal is \$55. The fee for a child's passport is \$70. To replace a lost or stolen adult passport the fee is \$85.

Birth Registration

Citizenship transmission requirements vary according to the date of birth. At present a child born to two American citizen parents abroad automatically acquires U.S. citizenship at birth if one of the parents has resided in the U.S. or its outlying possessions before the birth of the child. A child born to one American citizen parent may acquire U.S. citizenship, if the American parent meets the transmission requirement of having resided in the U.S. for at least 5 years, two of which were after attaining the age of 14, prior to the birth of the child.

To register the birth of your child, you should come to the Consular Section during American Citizens Services public hours and bring with you:

- the Azerbaijani birth certificate
- the parents' marriage certificate (if applicable)
- divorce decree of either parent (if applicable)
- the parents' passports
- if only one parent is an American citizen: that parent's proof of 5 years presence in the U.S. (tax returns, etc.)
- the child

After presenting all the necessary documents, you will receive a Report of Birth Abroad, which will serve as the child's proof of U.S. citizenship. The cost is \$65.

Adoption in Azerbaijan

According to the Adoption law of Azerbaijan, foreign adoptions are legally allowed. In practice, however, the Azerbaijani government closely scrutinizes any adoptions of Azerbaijani orphans by foreigners.

Most international adoption cases have been handled by international adoption agencies that have representatives in Baku.

While the consular section of the Embassy processes the I-604 (Request for and Report on Overseas Orphan Investigation), the immigrant visa will be processed in Tbilisi.

Additionally, the Child Citizenship Act of 2000 allows for the automatic acquisition of U.S. citizenship for both biological and adopted children of U.S. citizens who are born abroad and who do not acquire U.S. citizenship at birth.

The following are the Act's requirements:

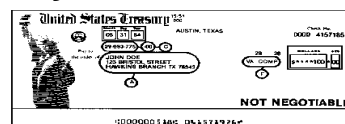
1. At least one parent of the child is a U.S. citizen, either by birth or naturalization.
2. The child is under the age of 18.
3. The child must be residing in the United States in the legal and physical custody of the U.S. citizen parent after having been lawfully admitted into this country as an immigrant for lawful permanent residence.
4. If the child has been adopted, the adoption must be final.

Two important notes: the child does not become a US citizen until he or she enters the US, and the child must enter the US with an immigrant visa in order to acquire citizenship under this act.

Informational Services

The American Citizens Services section maintains information for travelers, including brochures and pamphlets on travel safety, travel in the former Soviet republics, and taking pets back to the U.S., among others. We have Consular Information Sheets, which include basic health, safety and travel information, on all countries, including Azerbaijan. We also maintain lists of local lawyers and medical facilities. There is no fee for any of this information.

Federal Benefits & Social Security



Under current agreements, if you are entitled to U.S. federal benefits, such as Social Security or Veterans benefits, you may receive these benefits in Azerbaijan by picking up your checks personally. We can also assist you in contacting the Social Security Administration, the Department of Veterans Affairs and other offices.

Absentee Voting

We have information on how to register to vote and how to obtain absentee ballots for federal and state elections. We can place properly packaged, addressed and stamped (with U.S. domestic postage) absentee ballots in the U.S. Government mail system. We do not, however, sell stamps, weigh items or provide receipts. We cannot place any other items in the government mail system. More information on voting overseas is available on the internet at www.fvap.gov.

Family Emergencies

If your family needs to contact you because of an emergency at home, or because they are worried about you, they may call the State Department's Citizens Emergency Center at (202) 647-5225. The State Department will relay any message to us and we will attempt to contact you. If you

are registered, and if you have signed a Privacy Act waiver, we will be able to provide information about you to your family.

Deaths of American Citizens

If, unfortunately, an American citizen dies in Azerbaijan, the death should be reported immediately to the Consular Section. If the next-of-kin was not with the citizen at the time of death, we will notify them of the death and work with them to carry out their wishes with regard to burial or repatriation of the body. The Consular Section can also, with the next-of-kin's permission, act as a liaison between the family and local authorities. We will also prepare the necessary documents to allow the family to return the body to the U.S., if that is their wish, and a Report of Death of an American Citizen Abroad, which is based on the Azerbaijani death certificate and which can be used in the U.S. for most legal purposes. Be advised that the burial costs cannot be borne by the U.S. government and are the responsibility of the next-of-kin.

Arrests

If you or any American citizen are arrested in Azerbaijan, ask the authorities to notify a Consular Officer at the American Embassy immediately. We cannot get you, or anyone, out of jail. While in Azerbaijan, you are subject to Azerbaijani law and procedure, which are often quite different from U.S. law and procedure. However, if Azerbaijani authorities discriminate against you because you are American, or treat you unfairly compared with normal Azerbaijani procedures, we may be able to intervene on your behalf. Please bear in mind that, while our intervention may help, it may take time.

We can also provide a list of local attorneys, visit you in jail and, if you wish, contact members of your family on your behalf. We can also transfer money, food and clothing to prison authorities from your relatives for your benefit. We encourage everyone to work via local lawyers. In the end, only Azerbaijani authorities have the power to resolve a dispute.

Disasters & Civil Disorder

If there is a natural disaster or some civil disorder, we will use our warden system to notify American citizens and provide appropriate instructions and advice. If you are caught in a disaster or disturbance, let your relatives know as quickly as possible that you are safe. You may contact the Consular Section and ask us to pass a message to your family. Above all, remain calm, follow events through news reports and try to follow instructions from the Embassy. In the event of a disaster, we give priority to Americans who have been hurt or who are in danger. Also, we may be facing the same problems that you are, such as a lack of fuel, telephone connections or electricity. Please be patient with us if you are safe and sound.

Notarial Services



American citizens and others may receive a variety of notarial services at the Consular Section.

Documents, such as affidavits and powers of attorney, for use in the U.S. may be notarized. There is a \$30 fee for the first document, and \$20 for each additional copy.

Also, legal documents issued in Azerbaijan, such as birth certificates, can be authenticated for use in the U.S. To have such documents authenticated, they must first be "legalized" by the Azerbaijani Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After they have been authenticated at the Foreign Ministry, we can authenticate the signature and seal of the Ministry's representative. There is a \$30 fee for this service.

In some cases, affidavits executed at the Consular Section may be used for legal purposes in Azerbaijan after the signature and the seal of the Consular officer has been authenticated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We cannot, by law, authenticate documents issued in the United States. Such a document must be authenticated first at the U.S. local then the state level. Then, it must be authenticated by the Authentication Officer at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, DC. Finally, it must be authenticated by the consular section of the Azerbaijani Embassy in Washington, which charges a fee for this service. They can be reached by telephone at 202-337-5912 or by fax at 202-337-5913. Further information on authentications can be found on their web site at www.azembassy.com

What We Can't Do...

- help Americans extend or obtain valid Azerbaijani visas

- provide American Citizens Services to U.S. Resident Aliens ("Green Card" holders)
- get Azerbaijani laws waived because you are an American
- give money or a financial guarantee, or cash a check
- authenticate signatures and seals from the U.S.
- provide legal advice or representation
- become involved in private legal disputes
- provide postal services, forwarding or storage
- provide access to a fax or e-mail
- act as an intermediary for financial transactions
- trace missing persons in the U.S.
- provide medical services
- serve as a travel agency
- serve as an interpreter or translator
- serve as a real estate agency

Azerbaijani Visas for Americans

A passport and a visa are required to enter Azerbaijan. You can obtain additional information regarding Azerbaijani visas through their website which is <http://www.azembassy.com>. The Azerbaijani Embassy is located in Washington and their number is (202) 337-3500. You will also have to show your visa in order to depart Azerbaijan. Americans can purchase one-entry visas at the airport at a cost of \$40.

Registration with Local Police

All non-Azeri citizens who will be in Baku for more than three days are required to register with the Central Police Department, located at 39 Mardanov Street, near Taza Bazaar. The phone number is 90-94-03. Initial registration costs approximately 30,000 manats. Registration must be renewed yearly. You may be fined for failing to register or allowing your registration to expire.

Azerbaijani Customs

Travelers to Azerbaijan must fill out a customs declaration upon arrival that is to be presented to customs officials when departing the country. You should declare all items of value on this form. Failure to declare currency and items of value can result in fines or other penalties. If your customs form is lost or stolen report the loss to the police to obtain a certificate to show customs officials when you depart the country.

Azerbaijan's customs officials may enforce strict regulations concerning the temporary importation into or export from Azerbaijan items such as alcohol, tobacco, jewelry, religious materials, art or artifacts, antiquities and business equipment. Personal medicines with a doctor's statement can be imported without the permission of the Azerbaijani Department of Healthcare. US citizens may not import firearms into Azerbaijan. While there is no limit to the amount of currency imported, if more money is exported

than imported, the traveler is obligated to prove it was legally obtained.

The Ministry of Culture must license any valuables such as artwork, antiques, jewelry, carpets, paintings, etc. purchased in Azerbaijan. This license describes the object, assesses its value and provides permission to export it from Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan allows the export of up to 600 grams of caviar. However, under US law, the maximum amount that can be legally imported is 280 grams.

More specific information on quantities of items which can be imported duty-free can be provided by the U.S. Embassy in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Crime and Credit Cards

Inflation, unemployment and the breakdown of the social fabric have contributed to an increase in violent crime. Americans, and other foreigners, are seen as particularly choice targets. You should take all due precautions to safeguard your belongings, especially in hotel rooms, on trains and in public places. If you are the victim of a crime, report it immediately to the local police and to the Consular Section.

In the Consular Section, we have a number of brochures on travel safety in general and on traveling in the former Soviet republics. Additional security information is available from our web site <http://www.usembassybaku.org/>

Azerbaijan is largely a cash economy. Traveler's checks and credit cards are accepted at only a few locations. You should be extremely careful in protecting your cash. If you are traveling with your family, you may want to distribute your money among the members of your family and have each person use several hiding places. When you are able to use your credit card, you should exercise caution to make sure the clerk or attendant does not keep a copy of the impression made from your credit card or write down the card number. You should request that any carbons made of the credit card impression be given to you. You should also verify all charges made to your card to prevent unauthorized use of your credit card number. If your credit card is stolen, you should call the appropriate number in the U.S. below to cancel it immediately:

American Express:

800-528-2121
(212)687-3700

Mastercard:

800-888-7858
(314)275-6690

Visa:

800-336-8472
(415) 574-7700

Diners Club:

800-525-9150
(303)792-0629

Traffic safety is also something all travelers should keep in mind. Roads in Azerbaijan may be in very poor condition and unlit. Traffic signals, when actually working, and rules of the road are often completely ignored. Motorists race about recklessly and at excessive speeds. Pedestrians enjoy no right of way and are advised to be cautious when crossing streets.

Medical Emergencies and Health Concerns

All Americans traveling to Azerbaijan should make sure that their immunizations are up-to-date. Azerbaijan's water systems are often aging and poorly maintained. Water should be filtered and purified. A good rolling boil for 10 minutes will kill most bacteria and a good filter will remove most heavy metals and impurities. Several brands of bottled water may be purchased locally. Meats should be cooked thoroughly and fruits and vegetables should be washed and peeled.

If you have a medical emergency while in Baku, you may wish to contact the Consular Section for a list of English speaking physicians and/or facilities available.

Medical Evacuations

The Consular Section has limited information on various air ambulance companies that perform medical evacuations to Germany, Finland or the U.S. While we can help you or your family contact a medevac service, **the U.S. Government cannot pay for your medical evacuation. You may wish to make sure that you have medical evacuation insurance, available from many private companies, before the need arises.**

Banking Services

EXCHANGING MONEY

There are a variety of establishments including banks, hotels, and shops that exchange U.S. dollars for manats. The exchange rate has been steady at about 4900 manats to one U.S. dollar.

CASHING TRAVELER'S CHECKS, OBTAINING ADVANCES ON CREDIT CARDS, TRANSFERRING FUNDS

INTERNATIONAL BANK OF AZERBAIJAN

67 NIZAMI ST. (NEAR FOUNTAIN SQUARE). TEL: 93-68-23
AND 3 TAGIYEV ST.
TEL: 98-81-89

MOSTBANK

GUSIGAJIYEV ST.
TEL: 97-10-70, 98-07-78

BANK OF BAKU

65 NEFTCHILAR PROSPECTI.
TEL: 97-15-35, 97-14-90

WESTERN UNION

1. *Debut Bank - Credit Department*
53 Fizuli Str., 370014
Tel/Fax: 97-34-22, 97-34-21

2. *Bank of Baku*
65 Neftchilar Ave., 370004
Tel: 97-15-35, 97-14-90
Fax: 97-15-45

3. *Most Bank, Azerbaijan*
4 Husi Hajiyev St., 370005
Tel/Fax: 97-10-70, 98-07-78

Mail Service

It is illegal to send money or passports through the Azerbaijani mail. Several companies offer priority mail service between Azerbaijan and the U.S. A few are:

FedEx

Main Office

63 Ak. H. Aliyev (Inqilab)
Baku, Azerbaijan
TEL:(99 412) 90-60-83
FAX:(99 412) 90-60-84
GSM:(99 450) 222-3710
www.fedex.com

Office Icheri Sheher

10/12 V.Mamedov
Old Caspian Business Centre
Baku, Azerbaijan
TEL:(99 412) 92-72-23; (99 412) 97-62-11
bak001@entpm6.emea.fedex.com

DHL

225 Bashir Safaroglu St.
Baku, Azerbaijan
TEL/FAX: (99 412) 93-47-28/14

UPS

14 Yusif Mamedaliyev St.
Baku, Azerbaijan
TEL/FAX: (99 412) 98-84-37, 93-39-91

Telephone Service

You can place international calls from most hotels and guesthouses. If you have a direct dial international phone line, you may call the U.S. by dialing 8-10-1 and then the area code and phone number you need. To speak with an international operator, dial 007. While the answer is initially in Azerbaijani, most operators speak English or will connect you to someone who does.

Marriage in Azerbaijan

If you are coming to Azerbaijan to get married or plan on getting married while in Azerbaijan, pre-planning is a necessity. This process can be lengthy and frustrating if the proper steps are not taken. The way to avoid this is to contact the Consular Section for detailed instructions. We are available for any questions regarding marriage to a Azerbaijani citizen during regular American Citizen hours or by appointment.

U.S. Visas for Azerbaijanis



Non-Immigrant Visas

Click here for complete information on non-immigrant visa procedures at the US Embassy in Baku. All applicants must pay a non-refundable \$100 MRV processing fee. Applicants must have a completed DS-156 application form, one passport size photograph and an international passport expiring no sooner than six months after the planned travel to the U.S.. Application forms are available on the embassy website in English, Azeri, and Russian.

214(b)

Section 214(b) of the Immigration and National Act states that all applicants must prove strong family, social, economic and financial ties to their residence abroad and that the purpose of travel is authorized under the visa category. If an applicant cannot prove that they do not intend to immigrate to the U.S. or that the purpose of travel is authorized, the law says that they cannot receive a visa.

All applicants must comply with this section of the law based on their own situation in Azerbaijan; your sponsorship and your financial status in the U.S. **are not sufficient** for an applicant to obtain a visa.

Immigrant Visas

We do not process or issue immigrant and fiancée visas in Baku. They are processed and issued at the American Embassy in Tbilisi, Georgia. The Embassy in Tbilisi may be contacted at: (995-32) 98-99-67. The address is:

25 Atoneli Street, Tbilisi 380005, Georgia
Website: <http://georgia.usembassy.gov>
e-mail: consulate-tbilisi@state.gov

You may, however, file your immigrant visa petition on behalf of your alien spouse at the Consular Section during American Citizen Services' public hours.

Petitions for fiancée visas or spouses of LPRs must be filed in the United States with the USCIS (U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services) Service Center that has jurisdiction over your place of residence. We will be happy to provide you with information concerning this process.

Within the limits of what we are permitted and able to do, we look forward to providing you consular services.

GUIDE FOR AMERICAN CITIZENS IN AZERBAIJAN

Rev. Jan 2004

WARDEN REGISTRATION FORM

Please note that you need to include a copy of your passport with this form. Mail them to: Embassy of the United States, Consular Section, 83 Azadliq Pr. Baku , or fax: (995) 92-29-53.

1. Name and Address		
Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial:		
Permanent Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Local Street Address in Azerbaijan:		
City:	Postal Code:	
Phone 1:	Phone 2:	
E-mail:	Fax:	
Work Address in Azerbaijan:		
City:	Postal Code:	
2. Passport Information		
Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial:		
Passport Number:	Issue Date:	Passport Type:
3. Additional Information		
Place of Birth (Country, State, City):	SSN:	
Date of Birth:	Sex:	Male _____ Female _____
Expected Departure Date:	Length of Stay:	
Purpose of Visit:	Affiliation:	
4. Emergency contact in Azerbaijan		
Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial:		
Permanent Address:		
City:	Zip:	
Relationship:	Phone:	
5. Emergency contact in the U.S.		
Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial:	E-mail:	
Permanent Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Relationship:	Phone:	
PRIVACY ACT INFORMATION: IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRIVACY ACT (PL-579) PASSED BY CONGRESS IN 1974, THE EMBASSY CANNOT RELEASE ANY INFORMATION REGARDING YOU (EXCEPT THAT CONSIDERED IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN) TO ANYONE WITHOUT YOUR WRITTEN CONSENT. PLEASE SPECIFY TO WHOM THE AMERICAN EMBASSY MAY RELEASE INFORMATION.		
FAMILY MEMBERS?: Yes _____ No _____		
MEMBER OF CONGRESS?: Yes _____ No _____ MEDIA/PRESS?: Yes _____ No _____		
SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____		